GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4035
ANSWERED ON:17.05.2006
BAN ON INDIAN ATOMIC SCIENTISTS
Masood Shri Rasheed;Rajendran Shri P.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US has banned Indian firms under the US-Iran Proliferation Treaty, 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the US Administration has also banned Indian atomic Scientists;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/being taken by the Union Government for getting these restrictions lifted?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA)

(a) - (d) On September 29, 2004, the United States imposed sanctions, pursuant to Section 2 & 3 of the Iran Proliferation Act of 2000 of the United States on fourteen entities, which included two Indian scientists, Dr. Y.S.R. Prasad and Dr. C. Surendar. Later, under the same provision of the US law, on December 30, the United States imposed sanctions on nine foreign firms that included two Indian firms Sabero Organics Gujarat Ltd and Sandhya Organics Ltd. The sanctions bar the US Government from doing business with these firms and persons, including providing assistance to them or permitting participation in US Government assistance programmes. They also prohibit all US Government sales of any item on the US munitions list, any defence article, defence services or design or construction services under the Arms Export Control Act of the United States. They also ban export licenses to sell dual-use items under the United States` Export Administration Act of 1979 or the Export Administration Regulations, and suspend any existing licenses.

(e) The Government of India issued statements through the MEA Spokesperson on both occasions; stating, in the case of atomic scientists, that we did not share the US assessment. One of the scientists Dr. C. Surendar had never visited Iran while in service or after his retirement. Dr. Y.S.R. Prasad had initially visited Iran under the aegis of the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme. Thereafter, he provided consultancy on safety related aspects connected with the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant which is under IAEA safeguards. He had not visited Iran since mid-2003. The spokesperson also stated that no sale of materials, equipment and technologies was involved, no transfer of sensitive technology had taken place, Government of India`s commitment to prevent onward proliferation is second to none and our track record in this regard is well-known. With regard to the sanctions on the two Indian firms, the Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs stated that US actions were not justified as these entities had not acted in violation of our laws or regulations. The Government of India also took up the issue of sanctions with the US Government during bilateral interactions. These efforts resulted in the US Government announcement, through a Federal Register notification on December 30, 2005 that sanctions on Dr. C. Surendar had been withdrawn. Sanctions on Dr. Y.S.R. Prasad and the two Indian firms - Sabero Organics Gujarat Ltd and Sandhya Organics Ltd. - have not been lifted. Government of India is continuing its efforts with the US Government.